

GUIDELINES FOR UN GOVERNMENT RELATIONS COUPLE IN GENEVA
DRAFT (February 2013)

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I. INTRODUCTION

Establishment: The First Presidency approved the placement of a couple in Geneva to serve on a volunteer basis for government relations purposes ("Geneva Government Relations Couple") in May 2007. The couple resides in an apartment in Geneva within walking distance of the main UN facility (the "Palais des Nations"). Their calling is to conduct government relations activities with appropriate offices and individuals within the United Nations Office at Geneva ("UNOG") and its associated community.

Purposes: The work of the Geneva Government Relations Couple generally is:

1. To monitor relevant UN activities in Geneva;
2. To foster productive relationships with appropriate individuals and offices within UNOG and its associated community; and
3. To assist with implementation of Church-approved strategies re UN developments.

Reporting and Supervision: The Geneva Government Relations Couple reports to and is supervised jointly by the Office of General Counsel ("OGC") and the Public Affairs Department ("PAD"). OGC and PAD in turn report on the activities of the Geneva couple to the Public Affairs Committee through the International Coordinating Committee. For their Latter-day Saint Charities duties, they receive direction from the Church Welfare Department.

Representation: The Geneva couple wears several representational hats as the need requires. They represent the Church generally. They represent Latter-day Saint Charities. They can represent the International Center for Law and Religion Studies when necessary and appropriate. They may also use their prior professional status, if appropriate, in their various duties.

II. SUBSTANTIVE FOCUS

The principal substantive focuses for the couple's work are: (a) international religious freedom; and (b) worldwide humanitarian activities.

Religious freedom issues within the UN community are manifest in at least the following contexts: (i) pursuant to the work of the Special Rapporteur for

Freedom of Religion and Belief; (ii) in connection with the Universal Periodic Review of countries' human rights records; (iii) in periodic efforts to censure "defamation of religion;" (iv) in moves to protect "traditional" religions, or cultural traditions; (v) in efforts to extend and protect human rights; (vi) in the UN's implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Church is just beginning to determine how best to connect to the UN's humanitarian activities. The UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Activities will be one important place where the Church connects to these activities. Humanitarian policies and practices that could be of interest include (i) transparency; (ii) reporting; (iii) volunteer practices; and others.

Other potential issues in the UN's international context that could be of concern include:

1. Regulation of religions, including:
 - Religious registration
 - State financing of religions
 - Religious education
 - Missionary and proselytizing codes
 - Importation and distribution of religious literature
 - Religious practices (day of rest, circumcision, ritual slaughter)
2. Anti-discrimination policies (in employment, public services)
3. Immigration policies
4. Family law and policies

Other international activities and developments could affect the Church, including privacy and data protection policies, intellectual property policies, and tax and finance policies.

III. APPROACHES TO THE WORK

Government relations couples should consider using some or all of the following approaches in accomplishing their work:

1. *Work within coalitions* – identify individuals and groups, including NGOs, which have common cause with the Church on issues of concern, help coalesce them, and work with them to seek influence;
2. *The "Ammon model"* – seek to render meaningful service within a group of interest (such as taking minutes, writing reports, keeping track of assignments);
3. *Sustain and support others* – strengthen and enable others to do the work, open doors for them, provide them with information so they can move forward on common goals;
4. *Work with experts* – go upstream from the political action to the academic and other experts who provide expert testimony and help draft legislation and policy; and

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5. *Master the information* – those with the best information, or the best handle on the information, commonly will have the greatest influence.

IV. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring: All government relations couples, including those in the Geneva office, contribute to the effort to identify UN activities or developments that might be relevant to the Church. There are two basic approaches: “desk-top” monitoring, or “participatory” monitoring.

With “desk-top” monitoring the couple seeks reports of events or developments that have been collected and posted by others by scanning its information sources to discover pertinent items. Recognize that there is continual flux in source coverage and reliability.

“Desk-top” monitoring sources and tools include:

- Print media
- Official UN sites
- UN analysis & think tank sites
- Electronic newsletters
- Internet search tools (Google alerts, searches)

With “participatory” monitoring the couple seeks to learn what is happening or about to happen through participation in UN events and processes, contact with other concerned parties (including in NGOs), and ongoing relationships with UN officials, staff and diplomats. Successful “participatory” monitoring requires attention to meeting calendars, appropriate grounds passes to participate in meetings, and acquaintance with the best informed.

Reporting: Each government relations couple makes reports of monitoring items of potential interest. Typically there is agreement on the subject matters to be monitored by each couple. They each submit succinct monitoring reports to a central person (usually a separate Church service volunteer) who aggregates the monitoring items and distributes them to an established distribution list at OGC, PAD and BYU’s International Center for Law and Religion Studies (“ICLRS”). These individuals in turn forward relevant items to the senior brethren and other Church departments.

V. DIPLOMACY

Government relations couples seek to develop and maintain relationships with individuals of importance to the Church’s growth and development. The Geneva Government Relations Couple should continuously evaluate whether there are such individuals within the UNOG community, including those from “priority countries,” with whom such relationships would be useful. This work in Geneva

would normally be coordinated with the local public affairs directors. The Geneva Government Relations Couple should be vigilant in keeping effective records of their diplomatic contacts.

VI. PARTICIPATION IN INITIATIVES

The Geneva Government Relations Couple will participate in various initiatives – courses of action designed to advance the Church’s standing or effectiveness – that have been approved for Church involvement. The couple will recommend responsive or proactive initiatives, will respond to special requests, and may work on ongoing, approved projects.

Recommendations: Recommending potential Church initiatives is an important, challenging part of the couple’s work. It involves careful, often time-consuming analysis of, and thorough communication about, opportunities that could deserve action. A file of action recommendations and supporting research should be kept, since the office must be ready to respond rapidly if the recommendation attracts interest.

Responding to Special Requests: Special requests may come episodically or frequently depending on the situation. Responding to them is a high priority. For example, the Geneva Government Relations Couple has been asked to assist in “mapping” humanitarian activities within the UNOG community. Whenever the office responds to a special request, a good file of helpful information should be maintained.

Government Relations Initiatives: Initiatives or ongoing projects develop around special requests and recommendations that have received support from PAD and OGC. The projects require focus and relatively long cycles of attention. On occasion student volunteers or interns have been called upon to help. Their assistance has proved beneficial to the students and very helpful to the office.

VII. ADMINISTRATION

Supervision: The Geneva Government Relations Couple is supervised jointly by OGC and PAD. The

Monthly Conference Call: An important element of coordination and oversight is the monthly UN conference call that normally takes place on the 4th

“meeting ID” is also required to join the call. The ID (and a meeting agenda) is normally sent out in

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advance of the call. The Geneva Government Relations Couple will typically make a brief report of their activities during this call.

Record Keeping: The Geneva Government Relations Couple should maintain appropriate files and records of their activities. They should maintain any “desk books” that have been developed and should update office records. They should also become familiar with, and regularly use, the Opinion Leader Database, which is an electronic location where information about Church contacts is input and stored for use throughout the Church.

Budget: A budget for the activities of the Geneva Government Relations Couple has been established and is renewed (and adjusted as necessary) each year. The couple is the steward of this budget and should use it prudently. The budget is intended to be sufficient to permit necessary monitoring, appropriate diplomacy (i.e., contacting activities), meaningful participation in UN activities, participation in academic seminars as necessary, appropriate living and work facilities, necessary travel and the like.

**VIII. REPRESENTATIVE GENEVA
ACTIVITIES**

Representative activities of the Geneva Government Relations Couple include the following listed examples. These may provide ideas for future activities, and are appropriate sources of follow-up actions.

1. Since approximately 2008, the Geneva Government Relations Couple has participated actively with the Geneva NGO Committee on Freedom of Religion and Belief (“FORB”). From time to time, following the “Ammon model,” they have served as the official secretary of FORB. This relationship has been an important way for the Geneva Government Relations Couple to develop credibility on religious freedom issues. Thought should be given to how to better activate this committee and these relationships. .
2. The Geneva Government Relations Couple observes, each year, the proceedings of the Human Rights Council that meets within UNOG, normally during the Spring. This participation is an important way for the couple to stay abreast of UNOG activities that could affect the Church, and to maintain valuable relationships.
3. Since 2007, the Geneva Government Relations Couple have studied and followed the Universal Periodic Review process that takes place within the Human Rights Council in Geneva. This process may eventually provide a way for the Church, with or through other organizations, to address human rights and religious freedom

issues of specific countries, including “priority countries.”

4. *[Others to be developed, along with edits to the foregoing]*